(b) Does not arise.

(c) As reported by the FCI there are no procurement prospects in Tripura State in view of its hilly terrain and "Jhum" cultivation adopted in the State, at present.

Allotment of damaged wheat to Rajasthan for cattle feed

1685. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from the Government of Rajasthan for allotment of damaged wheat free of cost from the FCI for being used as cattle feed in view of scarcity of fodder in the State due to prevailing drought situation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this matter.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of Rajasthan had asked for an allocation of 30,000 MT of feed category foodgrains free from Aflotoxin and Mycotoxin for cattle feed on free of cost basis.

(c) The required quantity of feed category foodgrains has already been allotted to the Government of Rajasthan on free of cost basis. The stocks are being released to the State Government after getting them tested for Aflotoxin and Mycotoxin.

Sugar industry crisis in Uttar Pradesh

†1686. SHRI HARENDRA SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Sugar Mill Association has demanded Central intervention in order to rescue the crisis ridden sugar industry of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The question do not arise.

Functioning of PDS

1687. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the manner in which PDS is functioning in the country;

(b) whether Government have streamlined the PDS to serve the drought affected population in the drought-hit States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) launched in June, 1997 with its focus on the poor is functioning well in the country.

(b) and (c) The Government has constituted a Task force consisting of 40 officers from FCI and 10 officers from CWC for checking irregularities brought to the notice of the Government and also for general inspection/monitoring of the implementation of TPDS and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY). Deficiencies as pointed out by the Task Force teams are brought to notice of respective State Governments for taking remedial action.

Task Force for monitoring PDS

1688. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have set up a Task Force to keep a vigil on complaints of starvation deaths, diversion or recycling of foodgrains meant for the PDS;

(b) if so, when such a Task force was set up;

(c) whether it has become functional;